

Letter from Emma Garrett to Alexander Graham Bell, November 16, 1884, with transcript

COPY 306 Jefferson Ave. Scranton, Pa. Nov. 16, 1884 (or 1889) Dear Prof. Bell

I have received yours of the 13 Nov.

I cannot understand apathy on the subject of your note. I am well aware of the difficulties of our work and that Oral principals and teachers have such taxes upon their time and strength as to render it well nigh impossible for them to take measures to spread the knowledge of our work — still as speech for the deaf is such a blessing to this afflicted class — I think it is our duty to be aggressive and extend our efforts beyond our own schools.

No one could love peace more than I do but I cannot conscientiously be anything but aggressive till sign schools are done away with — or rather the practice of putting new pupils in them.

You are aware of the action of Penna. Inst'n. — or rather I should say individual members of that institution in attempting to break up the Oral school in Scranton immediately before I came here this fall; taking eight out of the twelve pupils gathered together here last winter. So I opened with a handful of pupils; my numbers are now increased to nine. Therefore as my present school is so near the beginning it cannot well be represented. Although their action against one school was a blow, it aroused such feeling among Scranton people that it will doubtless ultimately do good to the cause of oral instruction.

We have secured a great deal of the best sort of influence from Phila., through the State, and in Scranton so I trust we shall go strong enough to the Legislature in January to meet the opposition that we shall encounter from our two sign instns — Pa. & Western Pa. Instn.

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I received a letter from a pupil in my late school Oral Branch of Pa. Instn. (the Oral school that I established in Phila.) a few days since. It was a rather remarkable production — all things considered. He lost hearing at 11 months; is totally deaf and has been under instruction 2 yrs. I think I may send this letter to New Orleans through General Eaton. Marked — An uncorrected letter from a pupil in Miss Mary S. Garrett's class in Oral branch of Pa. Inst'n. stating all particulars in reference to writer also giving his name and address so that inquiries as to its genuineness can be made by any one who desires.

In haste — very truly yours, /s/ Emma Garrett I shall be very grateful to you for any information in reference to any action that Oral schools may be induced to take in this matter.